Enterprise NOW!

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Bringing the World to the Farm

By Darrell Noakes

Western Grain Trade Limited has come a long way since the inception of this family business 20 years ago.

The business began when David and Vicki Dutton branched out from their 5,000-acre family farm near North Battleford into seed cleaning in 1989, and then expanded into the world trade of specialty crops, primarily pulses.

David and son George operate the farm and oversee construction of plant expansion. Vicki and daughters Heidi and Lara look after sales and operations. Between its plants in North Battleford and offices in Saskatoon, the firm employs 20 people.

The company trades peas, lentils, chick peas, canary seed, flaxseed and mustard seed. Pulses, mainly lentils, make up the bulk of sales volume, says Heidi. The company also deals in popcorn and other specialty crops overseas.

The processing operation is what's known as a "soft handle" facility. Unlike conventional elevators, Western Grain's roots in specialty seed growing led to a focus on minimizing damage caused by mechanical handling. The same gentle handling that assures germination of seed crops also produces exceptional value in food products.

What makes Western Grain stand apart, however, is the way the company treats its customers, whether those customers are domestic farmers or foreign buyers. The business goes to great lengths to find just the right variety and quality of crop for each customer, says Heidi.

"There's a lot more selection process that we allow the customers to go through," she says. "That helps create product consistency. That's one of the things that makes us different from what else is being offered out there."

"At the end of the day, it really comes down to starting with a good, solid farmer—one who does a good job and cares about the product."

In April, Western Grain joined Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP) in its trade mission to the Middle East. The company attended the Confédération Internationale du Commerce et des Industries des Légumes Secs / International Pulse Trade and Industry Conference (CICILS) in Turkey, the world's premier international pulse industry convention.

Underscoring Saskatchewan's prominence as the global leader in pulse production,

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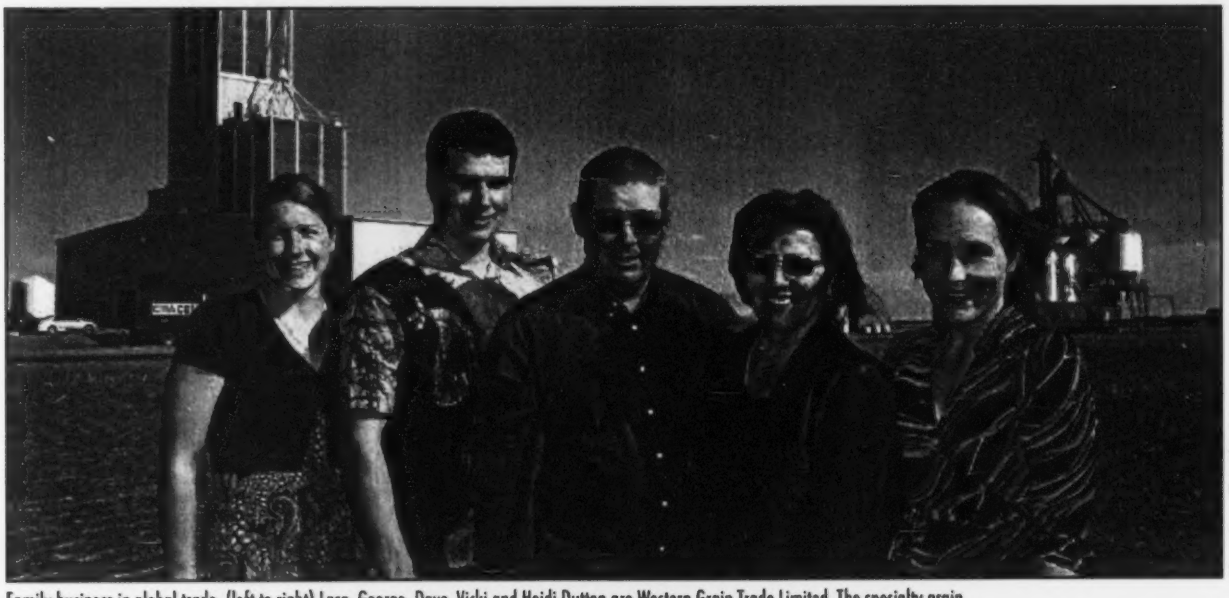


Photo: Darrell Noakes

Family business in global trade, (left to right) Lara, George, Dave, Vicki and Heidi Dutton are Western Grain Trade Limited. The specialty grain exporter, with two processing plants near North Battleford and offices in Saskatoon, joined the STEP trade mission to the Middle East in April.

From Music to Multiple Dimensions

By Virginia Wilkinson

Tucked away in an unassuming north central Regina studio is a highly successful, innovative entrepreneur whose work links him directly to the world of Hollywood feature films and TV sitcoms.

Musician, composer, sound designer and author, Rob Bryanton is both a Saskatchewan musical "great" and an entrepreneurial success story.

Nominated for 10 Gemini awards in the categories of Best Original Music Score for a Dramatic Series and Best Sound for a Dramatic Program, Bryanton and Talking Dog Studios have produced sound tracks for hundreds of films and television shows, including Corner Gas, Eli's Lesson, The Englishman's Boy, Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story, and Surveillance, which was featured at the Cannes Film Festival.

He is a Saskatchewan native who believes in Saskatchewan's potential.

"I guess I'm stubborn. I made my mind up when friends started to leave the province that I would make it here. There's no reason to leave Saskatchewan—we have many ways to reach worldwide markets."

Bryanton began his career as a musician/composer. An accomplished pianist and guitar player, his love for music started early in life. He made his first recording when he was 12, and was the host and music director of CBC TV's Easy Chair by age 20.

As a young adult, Bryanton played in a touring band with other great Saskatchewan musicians including Roberta Nichol and Jack Semple. He later became music director for Regina's Globe Theatre.

His production experience and his love of music eventually led him to the field of sound design. In 1989, he and partner Jim Folk opened Audio Image Productions, which was renamed Talking Dog Studios in 1995. Nine years later, Bryanton became sole owner of the company.

For many years, Talking Dog was the only sound studio between Toronto and Vancouver to be fully authorized by Dolby for theatrical 5.1 mixing. It is still one of the largest audio post facilities in the country, getting rave reviews from as far away as Hollywood.

Ray Bennett (The Hollywood Reporter) publicly applauded Talking Dog (and Bryanton's son Todd) for work done on Surveillance.

"The film looks great...Todd Bryanton's score helps maintain a constant undercurrent of dread," he wrote.

But Bryanton's entrepreneurial skills aren't just focused on the world of sound and music. In 2006 he authored a book, Imagining The Tenth Dimension, which looks at how time, free will, and dimensions work together.

Marketed almost entirely through the internet, the book was an overnight success. In just three years, it has been sold in 42 countries; its companion website has had more than 4 million visitors; and streaming videos linked to the book have been translated into nine languages.

A true entrepreneur, Bryanton is leveraging the success of Imagining The Tenth Dimension to further grow his company. He has established a television studio that creates corporate videos, and has also expanded Talking Dog's services to include interactive website development, the development of augmented reality products and services, and 3-D animation.

"We're using our Internet marketing expertise to supplement services we already provide, enabling film and television producers to better engage their audiences."

The move positions Talking Dog for further growth and development. Bryanton may have strong business development skills, but that hasn't been the driving force behind his success.

"For me, it's always been about creativity."

Photo: Keith Moulding

Rob Bryanton of Talking Dog Studios

"I was the luckiest man in the province"

Lyle Stewart—Enterprise Saskatchewan Board Chair, March 2008–May 2009

By Shirley Collingridge

In 1971, Lyle Stewart was a young but eager doorknocker. Nearly four decades later, his accomplishments resonate of experience and maturity.

Stewart seriously forayed into politics in 1999; Thunder Creek elected him as its MLA. By the time he donned the Enterprise mantle, Stewart had clearly defined goals.

"I wanted to create the impression that we are truly open for business in this province, that we welcome investments and the jobs and spin-offs that investment brings with it," he says.

"We don't believe that government is the main engine of growth. Government is a provider of services," he adds.

A farmer born and raised in Pense, Saskatchewan, Stewart is well positioned to recognize the province's issues and needs.

"The unique thing about Saskatchewan is that we have all the resources that every other place wants—oil and gas, mining, agriculture, the nuclear cycle," says Stewart. "But the wrong attitude and signals were sent from government to the private sector. That precluded the development of those resources and the prosperity that we see now."

When Enterprise Saskatchewan was carved out of Economic Development and Industry and Resources, attitudes were transformed. "We have people over there now who are absolutely dedicated to economic development in this province. We could not have achieved what we did without their co-operation," says Stewart.

To continue this momentum, we need increased power. While hydro, solar and wind power are useful, they cannot yet produce enough to sustain our needs. We need a combination of base load resources: clean coal, gas and nuclear.

"Our power supply is being met on a hand-to-mouth basis," explains Stewart. "There hadn't been any planning for growth or for the obsolescence of our current power fleet and aging infrastructure."

As he passes the Enterprise mantle on to Minister Cheveldayoff, Stewart will remain focused on his passion: economic development. "I was the luckiest man in the province for the last 18 months while I had this portfolio," he says.

"I am so pleased to have been able to make that contribution on behalf of my province that I care about."

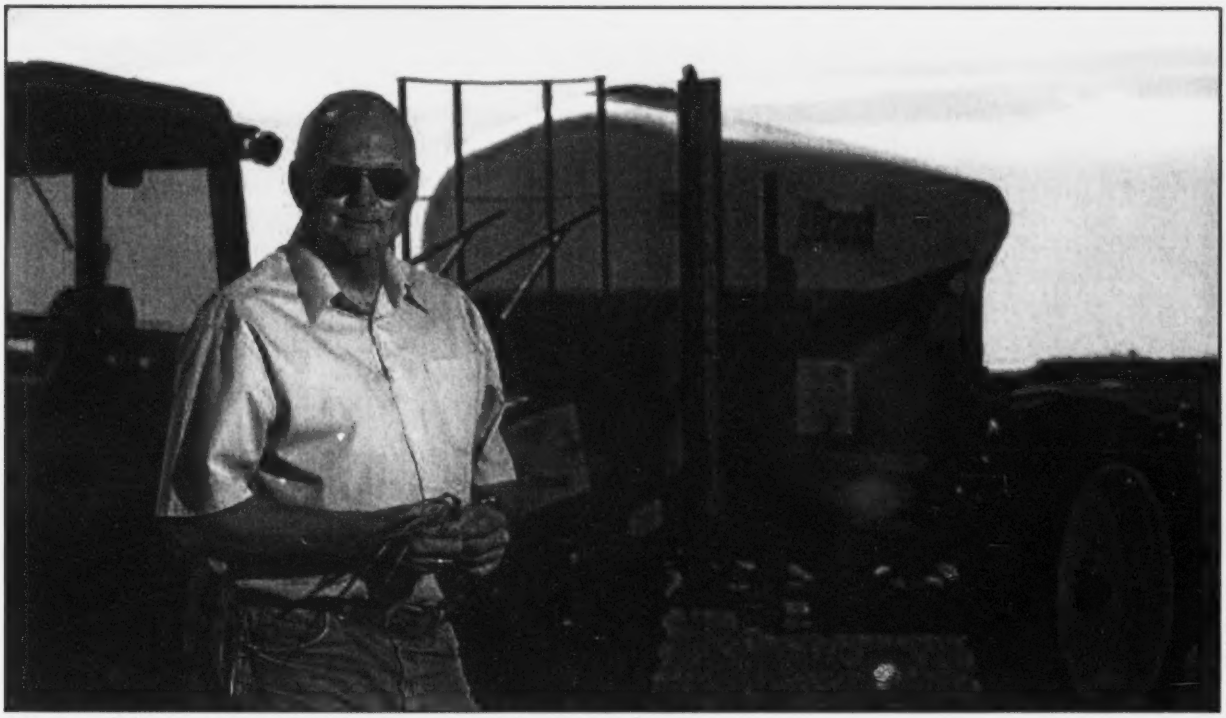


Photo: Calvin Fehr

Lyle Stewart on his farm near Pense: "We don't believe that government is the main engine of growth."

ENTERPRISE SASKATCHEWAN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Part One of a personal look at the members of the Board and their thoughts on the inaugural year of Enterprise Saskatchewan.

Gavin Semple

The mandate of Enterprise Saskatchewan is to make recommendations to the provincial government that will result in sustained growth in our economy and a perpetuation of the prosperity we currently enjoy in this province. Accordingly, we have made recommendations under the priorities of Tax Competitiveness, Regulatory Streamlining, Labour Market Development, Infrastructure/Utilities, access to Capital and Resource Value-added Development and Diversification. Some of our recommendations have been accepted by the Government and others are under consideration. Although some of our recommendations are quite aggressive, particularly in tax competitiveness, I am pleased with the Government's willingness to actively consider the long-term benefits of all the recommendations that have been made by the Enterprise Saskatchewan Board.

Crystal McLeod

I am supportive of the direction our Board has gone in since inception. Saskatchewan has set a clear economic mandate through the Enterprise Board and has met a number of key objectives. In the next year, I would like to see a greater focus on stimulating the Aboriginal sector of the economy to ensure full and meaningful participation. The Premier has stated this as an objective and the Enterprise Board is one tool to see that this is accomplished. It is in the best interests of all our citizens to achieve more self-sufficiency in Aboriginal communities through strategic partnerships with both the province and private industry.

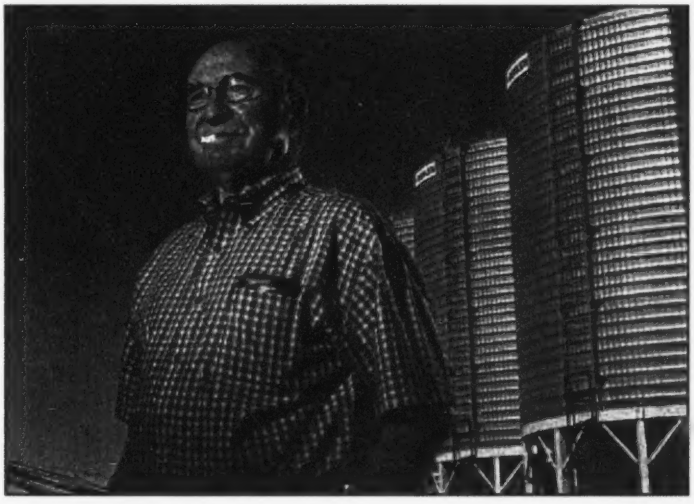
Hugh Wagner

My purpose in being a Director of Enterprise Saskatchewan is to bring the perspective of someone from organized labour to the dialogue around the numerous economic challenges and opportunities facing Saskatchewan people. It is essential to consider the social and environmental impacts of every policy recommendation. Decisions are not without consequences. If we emphasize GDP growth and fail to address widening income gaps, environmental challenges and the barriers holding back First Nations and Métis people, the great potential of the province will not be realized. Equally importantly, youth from every community must be engaged. The future is theirs.

Photos: Calvin Fehr

Myrna Bentley

A critical enabler for any venture, whether private, business or government, is the ease of doing business. The reduction of regulatory barriers and enhancement of service delivery is an area I believe is key tc our collective success in Saskatchewan. In all business sectors of the economy, modernization has accelerated and so, too, must government regulation—and not only to keep pace, but to seek to lead in ways that enhances our Saskatchewan business environment. We want a welcoming yet prudent and modernized regulatory environment as a foundation for entrepreneurship, diversification, resource engagement and growth. As a Director, regulatory modernization is a priority and a goal that I will continue to focus on.

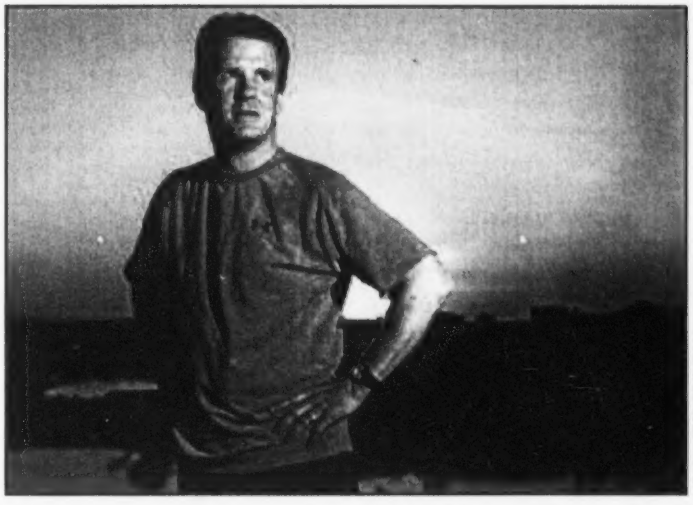


Bill Cooper

Enterprise Saskatchewan's new approach to policy development, along with support from colleagues and friends encouraged my interest in a Board position. Creating new opportunities for Saskatchewan and removing impediments to growth—I thought, "That's what I've been about during my whole farming career." To me, overcoming impediments to growth means regulatory reform, and we have made progress on that. This also requires a more co-operative approach with our other Western provinces. But, one of the things that really impresses me about Enterprise Saskatchewan is the whole notion of the "sector teams". Many of the team members are innovative community leaders.

Michael Fougere

What is particularly gratifying for me as a member of the Board of Directors is to participate in the model of Enterprise Saskatchewan, which provides private sector advice to the government, and to develop a progress report—a public record—on the outcomes of the advice given by the Board. I look forward to continuing to move forward with recommendations to remove barriers to investment, continuing to ensure our province remains competitive in corporate and personal income taxes, education taxes, and reducing regulatory constraints to growth, and developing policies that will ensure we build our infrastructure to support our continuing strong economic growth. Addressing our ongoing labour shortages also remains a challenge we need to continue to address.



Photos: Calvin Fehr

The Power Behind Partner Technologies Inc.

By Elaine Carlson

In 1989, Caron Hopfner and George Partyka started repairing transformers for SaskPower in a small garage in Regina. Both were electrical technologists who left good jobs in the transformer industry to run their own business, Partner Technologies Inc. (PTI).

The risk paid off. Within a year, PTI moved to bigger premises to keep pace with its repair orders.

"SaskPower was in the middle of its rural underground distribution project and they were taking pole mounted transformers off farms that had nothing wrong with them, so we got the idea to take the guts out of them and put them into padmounts that would be required for underground service," says PTI President Hopfner.

Then, on the basis of a new contract secured with SaskPower–who were to continue the rural underground distribution program–PTI moved to a still bigger space in 1995.

"But the program never went ahead, and we were forced to expand our customer base and product line because of it."

Manitoba Hydro, BC Hydro, and power companies in Alberta liked the new products. Before long, PTI was building larger and larger transformers that could serve industrial mining sites, shopping centres, apartment blocks and other industrial applications. The growth in business was exciting. "We went from building and selling small padmount transformers worth a thousand or two to building high voltage units worth well over a million dollars," says Hopfner. "It also meant that in 1998 we had to move yet again to a 100,000 sq.-ft. facility with more head room where we could install cranes."

PTI now employs over 100 people and is focused on building the High Voltage (HV) Padmount it designed in collaboration with Manitoba Hydro because of the enormous advantages it offers. Key is its size: where traditional transformers require large fenced compounds, the HV Padmount performs the same function in a box the size of a tool shed. In densely-populated areas where real estate is at a premium, PTI's innovation saves utility and industrial companies millions. PTI units are now shipped across Canada, the U.S. and the Caribbean, and as far away as South America, Europe and Africa.

Earlier this year, PTI was named one of Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies in a program sponsored by Deloitte, CIBC, the National Post, and Queen's School of Business. Hopfner and Partyka credit their hard-working employees, their commitment to customer service and innovation, and a quality assurance program it implemented several years ago for the success PTI now enjoys.

There are always challenges, however–the most recent being how to keep the business running and their employees working once Hopfner and Partyka decide to retire.

"We're now putting together a management team and strategically figuring out how to grow old," Hopfner chuckles, "but we're not out of gas yet, and it's still fun to work here!"

Visit PTI's website at http://partnertechnologies.net

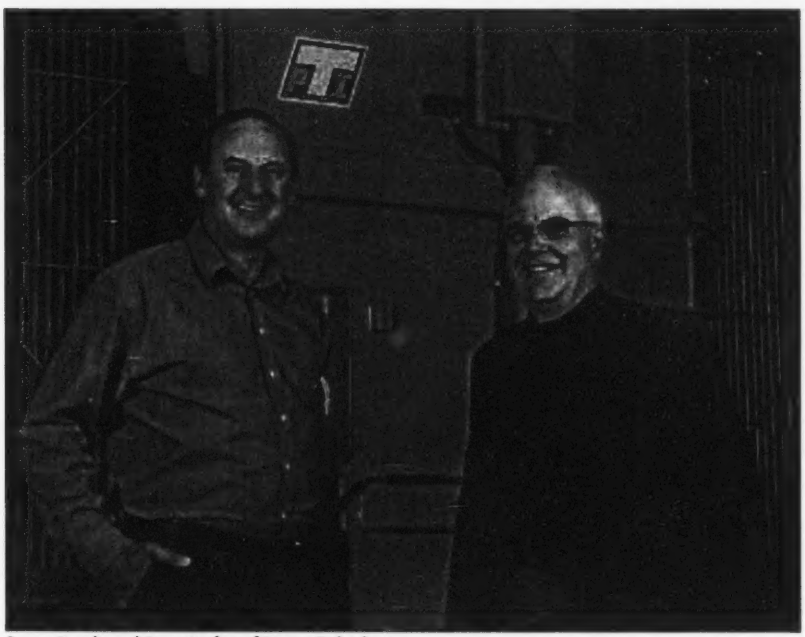


Photo: Lyndon Smith

George Partyka and Caron Hopfner of Partner Technologies

Can-Do Spirit Alive and Well at Esterhazy

By Elaine Carlson

Darrel Tochor, General Manager and one of four local owners of Goodman Industrial in Esterhazy, loves a challenge.

In 1987, when the company he worked for underwent a change in ownership, he took the plunge, purchased his former employer's facility, and started a one-man operation supplying pipe valves and fittings for the potash industry. Today, Goodman Industrial employs about 20 people, has an annual payroll of about $3.5 million, and expects $80 million in sales this year.

"The main reason why Goodman Industrial has been successful is because we never sat still with our product lines," says Tochor.

Early on, the company expanded into pumping and underground equipment to address water problems in the industry, and now has a product development team that works hand-in-hand with mine operators to tackle challenges.

"We don't consider ourselves to be just a supply company," says Tochor. "We try to be problem-solvers for our clients, and over the years we've saved our clients millions through the proper application of products and by finding new and better lines for the customer."

The most recent innovation is the 18 TD Shuttle Car with self-loading attachment, designed specifically for the potash industry. So far, Goodman Industrial has built two of these ore-hauling machines and expects to build three more this year. The first has already been sent down the mineshaft in pieces for reassembly below-ground.

A key feature of the new shuttle car is its hydrostatic drive. "Water can create brake and transmission problems in typical drive trains used in potash mines. Our new shuttle car will eliminate many of these problems and reduce the number of costly shut-downs," explains Tochor.

To design the car, Tochor put together a team of experts that included a former NASA engineer and a technical expert with years of experience in the underground mining industry in the U.S. Now the team is working on a second underground vehicle—a mancarrier—that applies the same hydrostatic technology. The first prototype should be available shortly.

"We've already been approached by some U.S. companies who are anxious to get the first one on the road. The potential is exciting," says Tochor.

To brighten its future even more, Goodman Industrial will soon market an LED line under the name Enduralite that offers enormous energy-savings potential for industrial and commercial clients. "Although it seems quite a leap, we've had phenomenal response from clients, so we're very optimistic this will open up markets for us throughout the world."

By the end of summer, Goodman Industrial will be in its new 16,000 sq-ft. facility in Esterhazy. "Obviously in our case, our location is excellent. Our overhead is low, transportation is certainly no problem, and it's easy for us to call on our major customers on a daily basis. It works for us, for our clients, and for the local economy.

"It's a beneficial relationship all around."

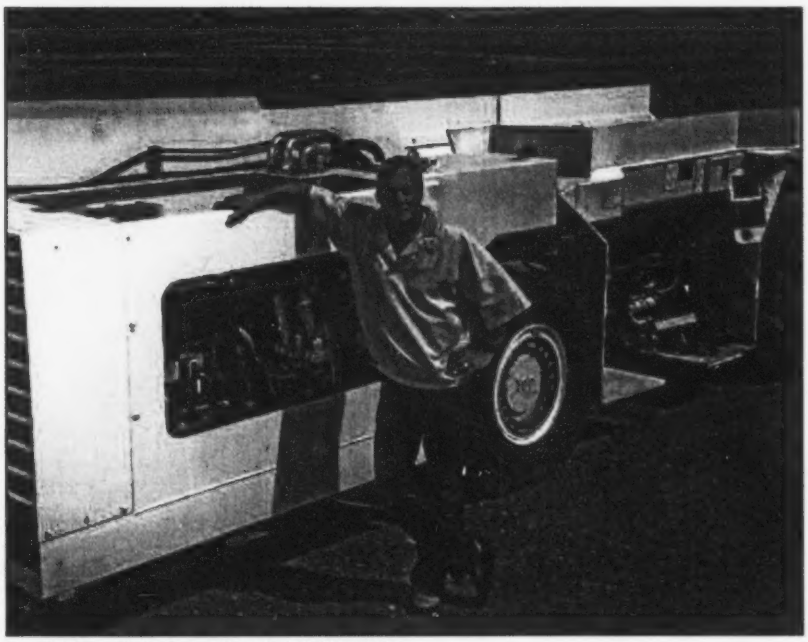


Photo: Lyndon Smith

Darrell Tochor with Goodman Industrial's 18 TD Shuttle Car

Bringing the World to the Farm

...continued from page 1

Heidi delivered Canada's address to delegates at the conference.

By establishing contacts for industry, STEP opens a lot of doors, says Lara.

"As a company selling all over the world, you don't have the resources to be in every market, every year, shaking hands with all the people that you need to," she says. "That's the leg work that STEP does for us. Every time you participate in a mission with them, you get to leverage some of their contacts and some of the people they meet with."

"A lot of countries are envious of the systems we have set up, through the varietal distribution program, through Saskatchewan pulse growers, through STEP," Heidi continues. "These are phenomenal resources to helping build industries, to create success within those industries."

"One of the things I appreciate as a Canadian is just really how valuable we are to the world and how much food we provide the world," says Vicki. "One of the things the specialty crop sector has done is we've brought the world to the farm. We are the grassroots and we have transcended from the grower to the exporter and we bring it down to the kitchen table.

"We are a global supplier of pulse crops. It makes you wonder what they ate when we weren't here, because we supply so much."

Canada is the world's leading pulse exporter, and Saskatchewan is the undisputed leader in Canadian pulse exports. Saskatchewan produces 99 per cent of Canada's lentils and chickpeas, and over three quarters of its pea crop. The export value of Canadian pulses in 2008 was approximately $1.9 billion, with Saskatchewan accounting for $1.6 billion of this figure.

NEXT ISSUE: A profile of Minister Ken Cheveldayoff in his role as the new ES Board Chair, and the Board's Progress Report (which is now viewable online at: enterprisesaskatchewan.ca).

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